

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. A fender assembly adapted for attachment to a fixed support surface of a dock structure at a predetermined height above the ground, said fender assembly
5 comprising:
 - a vertical guide track which, in use, is fixed with respect to the support surface,
 - a vertically disposed elongate fender guided for slidable movement along said guide track, and
 - 10 spring loaded fender restraining means co-acting with and adapted to resist movement of the fender when displaced downwards from a normal at rest position by an externally applied force, said fender restraining means being movable between a retracted position wherein the fender is supported in its said normal at rest position and an extended position wherein the fender is displaced downwards from said at
15 rest position.
2. A fender assembly according to claim 1 wherein said fender restraining means includes a transverse abutment against which the underside of the fender engages when the fender is in its normal at rest position, and whereby any downwards
20 movement of the fender causes simultaneous downward movement of the abutment from its retracted position.
3. A fender assembly according to either claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the fender is a solid rubber or rubber-like block having a slotted keyway extending centrally along
25 its rear face, said guide track slidably engaging within said keyway.
4. A fender assembly according to claim 3 wherein said keyway extends between the top and bottom faces of the fender and said guide track has a length which approximates the length of the keyway, and wherein said abutment is located
30 adjacent the lower end of the track when the fender restraining means is in its retracted position.

5. A loading dock fender assembly comprising:
a mounting securable to a support surface of a loading dock,
a fender guide track secured to and extending longitudinally of the front face
of the mounting,
- 5 a vertically disposed slidable elongate fender or bumper having front and rear
faces, guided for slidable movement along said guide track from a normal at rest
position on the track in either an upwards or downwards direction,
a fender restraining member movable between a retracted position in which
the fender is supported in its said normal at rest position and an extended position
10 spaced vertically downwards from said retracted position, and
bias means operably associated with said fender restraining member for
biasing the latter in the direction of its retracted position,
arranged so that, in use, when an external downwards force is applied to the
fender, the fender will slide downwardly along said track from its normal at rest
15 position against the resistance of the bias means.
6. A fender assembly according to claim 5 wherein the fender and the guide
track are approximately co-extensive.
- 20 7. A fender assembly according to claim 5 or claim 6 wherein said fender
restraining member comprises a vertically slidable U-shaped rod which has a pair of
upstanding legs extending along opposite sides of the fender, and a transversely
extending bridging portion interconnecting the legs, said bridging portion having a
forwardly projecting abutment secured thereto and abutting the underside of the
25 fender whereby any downwards movement of the fender causes simultaneously
downward movement of the U-shaped rod, and wherein said bias means includes a
pair of compressible coil springs each supported on a respective said upstanding leg
and extending along its length.
- 30 8. A fender assembly according to any one of claims 5 to 7 wherein said fender is
a solid rubber or rubber-like block having a T-shaped keyway formed in its rear face
centrally thereof, said guide track slidably locating within said keyway.

9. A fender assembly according to claim 7 wherein said mounting comprises an elongate planar or channel section plate which is fixable to the dock support surface by means of welding.

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10. A fender assembly according to claim 9 wherein said U-shaped rod is guided for vertical sliding movement by means of a pair of tubular sleeves fixed on opposite sides of the mounting plate adjacent the bottom corners thereof, each said upstanding leg passing through a respective said sleeve, with each of the coil springs
10 having its lower end abutting against the upper end of its associated said sleeve.

11. A fender assembly according to claim 10 wherein the upper end of each said upstanding leg is threaded and threadably receives a retention nut against which the upper end of a respective said spring abuts.

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12. A fender assembly according to claim 5 wherein the fender and the guide track are arranged so that the fender will slide upwards along the track from its said normal at rest position under the influence of an external upwards force applied to the fender and then return to its said at rest position under its own weight, when the
20 force is removed.

13. A fender assembly according to claim 7 wherein the bridging portion of the U-shaped rod, when the U-shaped rod is in its retracted position, lies adjacent the lower end of said guide track.

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14. A loading dock fender assembly substantially as hereinbefore described and with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

15. A loading dock assembly incorporating a pair of fender assemblies
30 substantially as hereinbefore described and illustrated in the accompanying drawings.